

REPORT OF THE EXPERT PANEL ON THE REACCREDITATION OF THE POSTGRADUATE (DOCTORAL) UNIVERSITY STUDY PROGRAMME

ARCHAEOLOGY
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES,
UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB

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INTRODUCTION

The Expert Panel appointed by the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE) created this Report on the Re-accreditation of the *Postgraduate (doctoral) university study programme Archaeology* on the basis of the Self-Evaluation Report of the Programme, other documentation submitted and a visit to the *Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb*.

The Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE), a public body listed in EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education) and a full member of ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education), re-accredits higher education institutions (hereinafter: HEIs) and their study programmes in line with the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (Official Gazette 45/09) and the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (OG 24/10). In this procedure parts of activities of higher education institutions and university postgraduate study programmes are re-accredited.

Expert Panel is appointed by the Agency's Accreditation Council, an independent expert body, to carry out independent evaluation of post-graduate university study programmes.

The Report contains the following elements:

- Short description of the study programme,
- The recommendation of the Expert Panel to the Agency's Accreditation Council,
- Recommendations for institutional improvement and measures to be implemented in the following period (and checked within a follow-up procedure),
- A brief analysis of the institutional advantages and disadvantages,
- A list of good practices found at the institution,
- Conclusions on compliance with the prescribed conditions of delivery of a study programme,
- Conclusions on compliance with the criteria for quality assessment.

Members of the Expert Panel:

- Dr. Igor Štiks, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom, president of the Expert Panel,
- Dr. Ljiljana Reinkowski, Universität Basel, Switzerland,
- Prof. Dr. Rozita Dimova, Ghent University, Belgium,
- Dr. Vladimir Unkovski-Korica, University of Glasgow, United Kingdom,
- Dr. H. J. M. J. (Harm) Goris, Tilburg University, Netherlands,
- Prof. David Maxwell, Emmanuel College Cambridge, United Kingdom,
- Prof. Elzbieta Osewska, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Poland,
- Prof. Mikhail Dmitriev, Central European University, Hungary,
- Prof. Andrej Blatnik, Univerza v Ljubljani, Slovenia,
- Prof. Ljiljana Šarić, University of Oslo, Norway,
- Prof. dr. Katrin Boeckh, Ludwig-Maximilian-Universität in Munich, Germany,
- Prof. Vincent Gaffney, University of Bradford, United Kingdom,
- Prof. Mika Vahakangas, Lund University, Sweden,
- Dr. sc. Nicole Butterfiled, Marie Curie Fellow, Seged University, Hungary,
- Anna Meens, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands,

- Kevin Kenjar, University of California, Berkeley, United States of America,
- Dr. Elżbieta Gajek, University of Warsaw, Poland,
- Dr. Kyle Jerro, University of Essex, United Kingdom,
- Dr Nadia Mifka-Profozic, University of York, United Kingdom,
- Dr. Moreno Mitrović, University of Cyprus, Cyprus,
- Dr. Catherine MacRobert, Oxford University, United Kingdom,
- Prof. Emeritus Svein Mønnesland, University of Oslo, Norway,
- Dajana Vasiljevicová, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic,
- Prof. dr. Christian Neuhäuser, Universitaet Dortmund, Germany,
- Dr. Dries Bosschaert, KU Leuven, Belgium,
- Dr. Oliver George Downing, University of Liverpool, United Kingdom,
- Prof. Hanoch Ben-Yami, Central European University, Hungary,
- Sonja Kačar, University Toulouse II Jean Jaurès, France,
- Garrett R. Mindt, Central European University, Hungary,
- Prof. Vieri Samek Lodovici, University College London, United Kingdom,
- Mišo Petrović, Central European University, Hungary.

The higher education institution was visited by the following Expert Panel members:

- 1. Prof. Vincent Gaffney, University of Bradford, United Kingdom, moderator,
- 2. Prof. Katrin Boeckh, Ludwig-Maximilian-Universität in Munich, Germany,
- 3. Prof. Vladimir Unkovski-Korica, University of Glasgow, United Kingdom,
- 4. Anna Meens, doctoral candidate, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands,
- 5. Mišo Petrović, doctoral candidate, Central European University, Hungary.

In the analysis of the documentation, site visit and writing of the report the Panel was supported by:

• Ivana Rončević, coordinator and interpreter at the site visit.

During the visit to the Institution the Expert Panel held meetings with the representatives of the following groups:

- Management,
- Study programme coordinators,
- Doctoral candidates,
- Teachers and supervisors,
- Alumni.

The Expert Panel also had a tour of the library, IT rooms, student register desk and the classrooms.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme contained in the licence: Postgraduate (doctoral) university study programme Archaeology

Institution delivering the programme: University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Institution providing the programme: University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Place of delivery: Zagreb

Scientific area and field: Scientific area of Humanities; scientific field: Archaeology

Number of doctoral candidates: 37

Number of funded doctoral candidates: 1

Number of self-funded and those funded by employer: 28

Number of inactive doctoral candidates (still entitled to graduate): 8

Number of teachers at the doctoral study programme: 20 of their own and 11 external associates Number of supervisors: 19

Taught / research ratio: 60/120

Taught component: (60 ECTS)
Research component: (120 ECTS)

Learning outcomes of the study programme:

- **LO 1:** Critically evaluate existing scientific theories and interpretations;
- **LO 2:** Collect and interpret qualitative and quantitative data;
- **LO 3:** Be familiar with scientific methodologies of other disciplines and implement them individually or in collaboration into archaeological research;
- **LO 4:** Conduct independent scientific research by using adequate scientific methodology;
- **LO 5:** Create new scientific interpretations based on original research;
- **LO 6:** Follow and respect ethical principles in scientific research;
- **LO 7:** Apply research results outside the frame of one's specialisation to a wider social context;
- **LO 8:** Present scientific contributions orally and in written.

RECOMMENDATION BY THE EXPERT PANEL TO THE ASHE'S ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

Issue a letter of expectation for the period up to two (2) years in which period the higher education institution should make the necessary improvements.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

- 1. The Department of Archaeology should provide a clear strategic plan; nesting research themes supporting the doctoral programme as well as methodologies to achieve research outcomes. There should be an explicit statement regarding educational strategies underpinning these goals. These data should be aligned to Faculty strategy documents as these become available.
- 2. The Department of Archaeology should implement a clear and transparent system of assessment and evaluation of student and supervisor performance. These evaluations should be considered by independent assessors and required actions should be monitored centrally.
- 3. The systematic use of plagiarism detection software is strongly recommended.
- 4. Improvements in available library resources for archaeology are required. Prominent journals are missing within the catalogue.
- 5. A re-assessment of available computing resources to support modern research should be undertaken.
- 6. Greater consideration of ethics is required as part of the research programme.
- 7. Formal integration of transferable skills within the taught element of the programme is highly recommended.

ADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

- 1. Breadth of academic flexibility and opportunity for students to develop their research programmes.
- 2. Breadth of professional connectivity and networking within Croatia.
- 3. Flexibility in relation to the personal circumstances of the students.
- 4. Evidence of strong professional linkages between students and supervisors which provides robust support in professional development.
- 5. Capacity and openness to interdisciplinary research.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

- 1. Lack of a strategic plan for development of the department.
- 2. Lack of research clusters or a lively research community.
- 3. Lack of infrastructure supporting transferable skills.
- 4. Lack of well-functioning assessment/evaluation/feedback mechanisms.
- 5. Potential discrepancies between funded, project-based and self-funded students.
- 6. Lack of formal assessment supporting progression throughout degrees.
- 7. Lack of documentation of career progression of post-doctoral students.

- 8. Lack of research resources for students (particularly in the library and software resources).
- 9. Lack of clear research plans for students from the onset of the programme.
- 10. Lack of clarity about the function and purpose of the extended scholarly article within the thesis.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

- 1. Linkages between alumni and their participation within professional and postgraduate events.
- 2. Joint supervision with international universities.
- 3. Inclusion of students on projects.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRESCRIBED CONDITIONS FOR THE DELIVERY OF A STUDY PROGRAMME

Minimal legal conditions:	YES/NO notes
1. Higher education institution (HEI) is listed in the Register of Scientific	YES
Organisations in the scientific area of the programme, and has a positive	
reaccreditation decision on performing higher education activities and	
scientific activity.	
2. HEI delivers programmes in the two cycles leading to the doctoral	YES
programme, i.e., first two cycles in the same area and field/fields (for	
interdisciplinary programmes), and employs a sufficient number of teachers	
as defined by Article 6 of the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and	
Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity,	
Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education	
Institutions (OG 24/10).	
3. HEI employs a sufficient number of researchers, as defined by Article 7 of	YES
the Ordinance on Conditions for Issuing Licence for Scientific Activity,	
Conditions for Re-Accreditation of Scientific Organisations and Content of	
Licence (OG 83/2010).	
4. At least 50% of teaching as expressed in norm-hours is delivered by	YES
teachers employed at the HEI (full-time, elected into scientific-teaching	
titles).	
5. Student: teacher ratio at the HEI is below 30:1.	YES
6. HEI ensures that doctoral theses are public.	YES, but provided
of the clipates that accordinateses are public.	digitally only after
	2013 and, it
	appears, only with
	consent of student.
7. HEI launches the procedure of revoking the academic title if it is	YES, but strongly
determined that it has been attained contrary to the conditions stipulated for	recommend the
its attainment, by severe violation of the studying rules or based on a	introduction of a
doctoral thesis (dissertation) that has proved to be a plagiarism or a forgery	robust anti-
according to provisions of the statute or other enactments.	plagiarism system
according to provide on the contact of carer endoments.	including software,
	if practical
Additional/recommended conditions of the ASHE Accreditation Council	F
for passing a positive opinion	
1. HEI (or HEIs in joint programmes) has at least five teachers appointed to	YES
scientific-teaching titles in the field, or fields relevant for the programme	
involved in its delivery.	
-	
2. In the most recent reaccreditation, HEI had the standard Scientific and	YES
2. In the most recent reaccreditation, HEI had the standard Scientific and Professional Activity marked as at least "partly implemented" (3).	YES
Professional Activity marked as at least "partly implemented" (3).	
	NO, there is a lack of strategic

	documentation at every level. Strategy documents should not be limited to research themes but should be underwritten by strong method and impact statements.
4. The candidate: supervisor ratio at the HEI is not above 3:1.	YES
5. All supervisors meet the following conditions:	NO/requires
a) PhD, elected into a scientific title, holds a scientific or a scientific-teaching	improvement*
position and/or has at least two years of postdoctoral research experience;	
b) active researcher in the scientific area of the programme, as evidenced by	
publications, participation in scientific conferences and/or projects in the	
past five years (table 2, Supervisors and candidates);	
c) confirms feasibility of the draft research plan upon admission of the	
candidate (or submission of the proposal);	
d) ensures the conditions (and funding) necessary to implement the	
candidate's research (in line with the draft research plan) as a research	
project leader, co-leader, participant, collaborator or in other ways;	
e) trained for the role before assuming it (through workshops, co-	
supervisions etc.);	
f) received a positive opinion of the HEI on previous supervisory work.	
*Not all data is complete in the CED governal individuals' regults appeared not	4 - la - da

*Not all data is complete in the SER, several individuals' results appeared not to be in accord with the SER data and could not be assessed through the available links e.g. some Google scholar profiles were locked.

- a) YES, but one individual appeared not to hold a scientific position. This might be an error.
- b) YES, but one individual may be considered not research active and did not appear to have any publications within five years.
- c) NO. They do not have formal research plans upon admission. Feasibility of the dissertation topic is only established later on in the programme.
- d) NO. However, according to the SER some of the supervisors meet this condition.
- e) NO. No data available. There is no formal way of checking this.
- f) NO. No data available. There is no formal way of checking this.

6. All teachers meet the following conditions:	According to SER:	
a) holds a scientific or a scientific-teaching position;	a) YES	
b) active researcher, recognized in the field relevant for the course (table 1,	b) YES	
Teachers).		
7. The supervisor normally does not participate in the assessment	YES, for PhDs	
committees.	started 2013 or	
	later.	
8. The programme ensures that all candidates spend at least three years	YES*	
doing independent research (while studying, individually, within or outside		
courses), which includes writing the thesis, publishing, participating in		

international conferences, field work, attending courses relevant for research etc.

*There are 120 ECTS for independent research in the programme, and students have another five years to do research independently afterwards.

Students typically took 7-8 years to complete. The consequence of such a situation is a negative impact on the living conditions of students, as well as their ability to undertake continuous research, conferences abroad, etc.

9. For joint programmes and doctoral schools (at the university level):

cooperation between HEIs is based on adequate contracts; joint programmes are delivered in cooperation with accredited HEIs; the HEI delivers the programme within a doctoral school in line with the regulations and ensures good coordination aimed at supporting the candidates; at least 80% of

courses are delivered by teachers employed at HEIs within the consortium.

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

1. RESOURCES: TEACHERS, SUPERVISORS, RESEARCH CAPACITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE	
1.1. HEI is distinguished by its scientific/artistic achievements in the discipline in which the doctoral study programme is delivered.	 Overall: Improvements are Necessary Almost all supervisors have been research active within the last five years. High Quality Staff produced an average of 49 articles, an average of 66 citations but individual impact scores of 3 (note that a small number of profiles appear to be incorrect or the Google scholar links were locked). Improvements are necessary. Most publications are within local or regional journals. Improvements are necessary.
1.2. The number and workload of teachers involved in the study programme ensure quality doctoral education.	Improvements are necessary It is apparent that several teachers have excessive workloads. It was notable that few students appear to have been impacted by this.
1.3. The teachers are highly qualified researchers who actively engage with the topics they teach, providing a quality doctoral programme.	 Improvements are necessary Almost all teachers have been research active within the five years within their area. With average impact scores of 3 it is clear that most publications are only of local impact.
1.4. The number of supervisors and their qualifications provide for quality in producing the doctoral thesis.	There are enough supervisors for the number of candidates. Supervisors are qualified, resulting in quality theses. However, although the supervisor qualifications and performance are monitored, they do not receive any feedback. This evaluation process requires improvements.
1.5. The HEI has developed methods of assessing the qualifications and competencies of teachers and	Improvements are necessary. There is a formal evaluation process to determine the

	supervisors.	competencies of teachers and supervisors. However, it is not functioning fully as there is no feedback to supervisors.
1.6.	The HEI has access to high-quality resources for research, as required by the programme discipline.	Improvements are necessary. While the resources the Panel were able to inspect, in a short visit to the library, appeared of good quality, the students themselves raised doubts about resources at their disposal and specifically in relation to important (e-) journals and computing. Inspection of the Faculty catalogues supports this assertion.
2.	INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE PROGRAMME	
2.1.	The HEI has established and accepted effective procedures for proposing, approving and delivering doctoral education. The procedures include identification of scientific/ artistic, cultural, social and economic needs.	Improvements are necessary. The programme currently lacks a specific strategy for delivering scientific/ artistic/ social and economic needs.
2.2.	The programme is aligned with the HEI research mission and vision, i.e. research strategy.	Improvements are necessary. There is no strategy document at departmental or Faculty level.
2.3.	The HEI systematically monitors the success of the programmes through periodic reviews, and implements improvements.	Improvements are necessary. During the site visit it was demonstrated that the Department and the Faculty have a system for providing feedback, but the results are not shared, so cannot be acted upon. No other systems of monitoring were apparent.
2.4.	HEI continuously monitors supervisors' performance and has mechanisms for evaluating supervisors, and, if necessary, changing them and mediating between the supervisors and the candidates.	Improvements are necessary. There appears to be a system for monitoring the performance of supervisors, but data is retained by the centre and does not appear to be utilised.
2.5.	HEI assures academic integrity and freedom.	Improvements are necessary. There appear to be no formal procedures for detecting plagiarism.

2.6.	The process of developing and defending the thesis proposal is transparent and objective, and includes a public presentation.	High Quality As far as the assessors could establish, the process of developing and defending the thesis proposal is transparent and objective, and includes a public presentation.
2.7.	Thesis assessment results from a scientifically sound assessment of an independent committee.	High Quality The Expert Panel checked the student files and found that supervisors were part of the committee for students enrolled before 2013. On that basis such committees cannot be regarded as fully independent or objective. As of 2013 students enrolled cannot have a supervisor as a member of the committee. In all the cases checked the committee consisted of 3 or 5 members, one of which is external member.
2.8.	The HEI publishes all necessary information on the study programme, admissions, delivery and conditions for progression and completion, in accessible outlets and media.	Improvements are necessary The University website provides an appropriate level of information for domestic students. The departmental website provides information about the programme in English. The staff appeared willing to teach in English but, although the Faculty advertises courses in English on its website, some of the links lead directly to standard course descriptions in Croatian. If the programme wants to attract more foreign students, the call for applications should be advertised in English and more broadly.
2.9.	Funds collected for the needs of doctoral education are distributed transparently and in a way that ensures sustainability and further development of doctoral education (ensures that candidates' research is carried out and supported, so that doctoral education can be completed successfully).	Improvements are necessary. The tuition fee is prescribed by the Faculty for all the doctoral programmes and amounts to 8500 HRK. The head of the programme stated that 20% was taken by the Faculty for overhead costs while the programme uses the rest. Following consideration by the assessors it was considered that the financial structures relating to distribution of funds were opaque. The Panel was assured that funds were collected for student uses. Without insight into the finances the Panel was unable to check how the fees are determined and spent.

There is concern for the apparent gap between the funded

		and unfunded PhD students. The latter have less opportunities to go abroad, for example. A budget for student research and travel would be invaluable
		Improvements are necessary.
2.10	. Tuition fees are determined on the basis of transparent criteria (and real costs of studying).	The tuition fee amount is prescribed by the Faculty for all the doctoral programmes and amounts to 8500 HRK. The information explaining the criteria for determining the tuition fee was not available to the Expert Panel.
3.	SUPPORTTODOCTORALCANDIDATESANDTHEIRPROGRESSION	
		Improvements are necessary.
3.1.	The HEI establishes admission quotas with respect to its teaching and supervision capacities.	Although admission quotas are officially set between 5 and 25 students overall, this decision is only to ensure that HEI is flexible when accepting students. There seem to be no strict admission quotas in place. However, in practise, the candidate: supervisor ratio is adhered to.
		Improvements are necessary.
3.2.	The HEI establishes admission quotas on the basis of scientific/ artistic, cultural, social, economic and other needs.	There did not seem to be a quota system related to national or academic needs, although the Department took care that the number of students would not exceed their teaching/supervision capacities.
		Improvements are necessary.
3.3.	The HEI establishes the admission quotas taking into account the funding available to the candidates, that is, on the basis of the absorption potentials of research projects or other sources of funding.	It was not apparent that any quota system was in operation and all cohorts of students to whom the panel spoke suggested that a proportion of students (mostly the self-funded ones) are disadvantaged by the fee levels set and have less access to financial support from other sources, like research projects or institutions.
3.4.	The HEI should pay attention to the	High Quality
	number of candidates admitted as to provide each with an advisor (a potential supervisor). From the point of admission to the end of doctoral education, efforts are invested so that each candidate has a sustainable	From the point of admission every student is provided with an advisor, who is often the potential supervisor. During the first two years, together with the advisor, the student identifies a suitable thesis topic and creates a detailed research plan which is then defended during the second

	research plan and is able to complete doctoral research successfully.	year.
3.5.	The HEI ensures that interested, talented and highly motivated candidates are recruited internationally.	Overall: Improvements are Necessary Evidence provided to the Panel suggests that it is clearly possible for international students to enrol and complete their doctoral study in English. High Quality The recruitment procedure itself could benefit from a broader international outlook. Improvements are necessary.
3.6.	The selection process is public and based on choosing the best applicants.	Improvements are necessary. Procedures exist for selecting and assessing student quality. However, the Panel would recommend having a detailed research proposal at the onset of doctoral studies or including it in the admission procedure.
3.7.	The HEI ensures that the selection procedure is transparent and in line with published criteria, and that there is a transparent complaints procedure.	Improvements are necessary. There seems to be a complaint procedure in place for students who were denied entry to the programme. However, the lack of clarity surrounding the process suggests that these regulations should be more transparent.
3.8.	There is a possibility to recognize applicants' and candidates' prior learning.	High Quality The Department is open to alternative academic paths and appreciative of the opportunities for interdisciplinarity.
3.9.	Candidates' rights and obligations are defined in relevant HEI regulations and a contract on studying that provides for a high level of supervisory and institutional support to the candidates.	Improvements are necessary. Although existing HEI regulations provide general information about the doctoral study, contracts listing the candidates' rights and obligations do not exist. Instead, from 2017 students obtaining the funding from the HEI must sign a contract, which places the self-funding students in a different position. The Panel's suggestion would be that all enrolled students sign a contract which would define the requirements and obligations of both the students and the supervisors.

	Improvements are necessary.
3.10. There are institutional support mechanisms for candidates' successful progression.	There appeared to be no such formal mechanism. The institutional support for doctoral research or standard transferable skills will benefit from improvement, e.g. offering project management or financial training, for future career development. Institutional support is also thin with regard to the library and software, as also mentioned elsewhere in this report, and needs to be enhanced by offering access to more e-sources and GIS for example to allow the students to do state-of-the-art research.
4. PROGRAMME AND OUTCOMES	
	Improvements are necessary.
4.1. The content and quality of the doctoral programme are aligned with internationally recognized standards.	In comparison with other degrees, the taught element of the doctoral programme is significantly high, and intensive in terms of the use of supervisor time. Although students noted that the focus on lectures is high, they appear profoundly appreciative of, one-to-one lectures/seminars with doctoral students (the so-called "privatissimum").
4.2. Programme learning outcomes, as well as the learning outcomes of modules and subject units, are aligned with the level 8.2 of the CroQF. They clearly describe the competencies the candidates will develop during the doctoral programme, including the ethical requirements of doing research.	Improvements are necessary. The site visit and the Self-Evaluation Report suggest that the Department follows the criteria outlined in CroQF. However, the discussion with staff suggests there is a significant underappreciation of the ethical challenges involved in research.
4.3. Programme learning outcomes are	High Quality
logically and clearly connected with teaching contents, as well as the contents included in supervision and research.	Classes only contribute to 1 out of the 8 defined learning outcomes (LO2: 'collect and interpret qualitative and quantitative data'). The rest of the learning objectives are reached by doing research.
4.4. The doctoral programme ensures the	High Quality
achievement of learning outcomes and competencies aligned with the level 8.2 of the CroQF.	The learning outcomes and competencies of the programme have been based on the CroQF and therefore,

		are aligned with these.
4.5.	Teaching methods (and ECTS, if applicable) are appropriate for level 8.2 of the CroQF and assure achievement of clearly defined learning outcomes.	High Quality The "privatissimum" classes offer a lot of flexibility in terms of planning and adapting it to the specific research topic of the candidate, which is appreciated by the students. There is some confusion whether these classes are consultations or not (the students think they are consultations, the supervisors said they were classes). The classes contribute to one learning outcome according to the SER, but hopefully includes more learning objectives in practice. The research seminar is also well appreciated by students.
		Improvements are necessary.
4.6.	The programme enables acquisition of general (transferable) skills.	Although a small amount of feedback is offered for research presentation, there was no evidence for possibilities to acquire generic transferable skills including grant preparation, budgetary training or project management.
4.7.	Teaching content is adapted to the needs of current and future research and candidates' training (individual course plans, generic skills etc.).	Overall: Improvements are Necessary. Courses are academically flexible, and adapted to needs. High quality However, generic skills transfer is a minor element of the programme or absent. Improvements are necessary.
4.8.	The programme ensures quality through international connections and teacher and candidate mobility.	Overall: Improvements are Necessary. Opportunities for mobility or attendance at conference are available. However, it is not apparent that these opportunities are universally accessible. Independently funded students may not be provided with opportunities available to doctoral students operating within larger, formal project or who are sponsored by institutions. In particular, unfunded students have fewer opportunities to go abroad because they do not have a travel budget. A departmental travel budget to which all candidates could apply is desirable.

Improvements are necessary.
The availability of international and joint doctoral supervision of PhDs is good practise. High Quality.

* NOTE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXPERT PANEL TO THE ASHE'S ACCREDITATION COUNCIL AND QUALITY LABEL

The role of the Expert Panel in the re-accreditation of doctoral study programmes is manifold. The Expert Panel or part of the Expert Panel visiting a higher education institution drafts a report on the basis of a self-evaluation report, the accompanying relevant documentation, and a site visit to HEI. The draft report is adopted by all members of the Cluster Expert Panel, while the president of the Cluster Expert Panel is responsible for coordinating the assessment levels.

The report contains an assessment on whether a doctoral study programme delivered at a higher education institution complies with the prescribed laws and by-laws, as well as any additional/recommended requirements defined by the Agency's Accreditation Council, and whether a higher education institution can obtain a positive, i.e. satisfactory quality assessment according to the criteria set out in this document. Moreover, the Expert Panel must make recommendations for quality improvement.

Based on the assessment of all these elements, the Expert Panel may propose to the Accreditation Council of the Agency to issue either a confirmation on compliance, a letter of expectation for the period up to three (3) years in which period the higher education institution should eliminate the identified deficiencies, or to deny the license.

If the Expert Panel has assessed that a doctoral study programme delivered by a higher education institution does not meet legal and other requirements or that the quality of a study programme is not ensured (i.e. that HEI does not meet additional requirements or recommendations made by the Accreditation Council, or has a very poor quality assessment), they should propose to the Accreditation Council to deny the license.

If the Expert Panel considers that the relevant laws and bylaws have been met by a higher education institution, but that certain elements mentioned above do not meet the quality requirements, while they consider that the identified shortcomings can be corrected within a time frame of three years, they should issue a letter of expectation.

If the Expert Panel considers that all legal and additional/recommended requirements have been met and the quality assessment is satisfactory, i.e. that a study programme fulfils the learning outcomes appropriately defined for that level and scientific area, they may propose the issuance of a certificate and have a HEI commit to quality improvement and reporting to the Agency during the follow-up period.

Finally, if the Expert Panel has, in accordance with the criteria mentioned above, proposed issuing the certificate of compliance and assessed that, in addition to meeting the minimum quality requirements – i.e. the qualification framework level - for a study programme, the programme should be identified as a doctoral programme of a 'high level of quality', the Expert Panel may propose to the Agency's Accreditation Council that such a doctoral study programme be awarded the 'high quality label'. Thus the Agency, with the consent of the Accreditation Council, grants a higher education institution the right to use the label for their academic and promotional purposes.

The 'high quality label' cannot be proposed or awarded to a programme or a higher education institution that does not comply with the requirements laid down by the laws and bylaws mentioned in this document, and any additional requirements recommended by the Accreditation Council. Moreover, the quality assessment awarded to a study programme should reflect a high level of quality inasmuch that at least half of the sub-criteria in each of the quality assessment criteria are assessed as being of high quality. The Accreditation Council of the Agency issues a final opinion on the label awarded. The content and form of the quality labels shall be prescribed by the Agency in a relevant general act.

The Accreditation Council of the Agency discusses the final report with all recommendations and suggestions, and issues their opinion on the report. Based on a prior opinion of the Accreditation Council, the Agency issues an Accreditation Recommendation to the minister responsible for science and higher

education, and upon receipt of the minister's final decision on the outcome of the procedure, awards the 'high quality label" to a higher education institution.